

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN

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KELLY SUTTNER,

Plaintiff,

v.

Case No. 18-cv-964-pp

NANCY BERRYHILL,

Defendant.

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**ORDER GRANTING MOTION FOR LEAVE TO PROCEED WITHOUT  
PREPAYMENT OF THE FILING FEE (DKT. NO. 3)**

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On June 26, 2018, the plaintiff filed a complaint seeking judicial review of a final administrative decision denying her claim for disability insurance benefits under the Social Security Act. Dkt. No. 1. The plaintiff also filed a motion for leave to proceed without prepayment of the filing fee. Dkt. No. 3.

To allow the plaintiff to proceed without paying the filing fee, the court first must decide whether the plaintiff has the ability to pay the filing fee; if not, it must determine whether the lawsuit is frivolous. 28 U.S.C. §§1915(a) and 1915(e)(2)(B)(i).

Based on the facts in the plaintiff's affidavit, the court concludes that she does not have the ability to pay the filing fee. The plaintiff indicates that she last was employed in October 2011, dkt. no. 3 at 2, and that she is "not currently employed as [she is] disabled," *id.* at 5. The plaintiff's husband is employed—his monthly income is \$2,200, and the total amount of the couple's

monthly obligations is \$2,160. Id. at 4. The court concludes from the information provided that the plaintiff has demonstrated she cannot pay the \$350 filing fee and \$50 administrative fee.

The next step is to determine whether the case is frivolous. A case is frivolous if there is no arguable basis for relief either in law or in fact. Denton v. Hernandez, 504 U.S. 25, 31 (1992) (quoting Nietzke v. Williams, 490 U.S. 319, 325 (1989); Casteel v. Pieschek, 3 Fed. 1050, 1056 (7th Cir. 1993)). A person may obtain district court review of a final decision of the Commissioner of Social Security. 42 U.S.C. §405(g). The district court must uphold the Commissioner's final decision if the Commissioner used the correct legal standards and the decision is supported by substantial evidence. See Roddy v. Astrue, 705 F.3d 631, 636 (7th Cir. 2013).

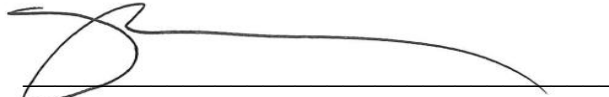
The plaintiff's complaint alleges that she is disabled and that the defendant's denial of benefits is based on conclusions and findings of fact that are not supported by substantial evidence and are contrary to law and regulation. At this early stage in the case, and based on the information in the plaintiff's complaint, the court concludes that there may be a basis in law or in

fact for the plaintiff's appeal of the Commissioner's decision, and that the appeal may have merit, as defined by 28 U.S.C. §1915(e)(2)(B)(i).

The court **GRANTS** the plaintiff's motion for leave to proceed without paying the filing fee. Dkt. No. 3.

Dated in Milwaukee, Wisconsin this 6th day of July, 2018.

**BY THE COURT:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Pepper', written over a horizontal line.

**HON. PAMELA PEPPER**  
**United States District Judge**